



October 8, 2004

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

Re: Meningococcal Disease Control Guidelines

Please note the following changes to the Meningococcal Disease Control Guidelines. These changes have been made in accordance with upcoming revisions to the Health Canada guidelines.

Page 2, Subsection 3.0 “Epidemiology:”

- New subsection

Page 3, Subsection 4.0 “Definitions:”

- List of close contacts includes specific airline passengers
- Definition of a secondary case specifies illness beginning more than 24 hours after that of the index case. Previous guidelines had specified illness beginning at least 2 days after illness in the index case.

Page 8, Subsection 6.3 “Immunoprophylaxis of Close Contacts:”

- When the case is identified as having meningococcal C, new recommendation is to use meningococcal C conjugate vaccine to vaccinate close contacts who were vaccinated **more than 2 years** previously with meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (Quadrivalent – Groups A, C, Y, W-135) or Bivalent –AC vaccine. Previous recommendation was to immunize providing it was at least 6 months since the receipt of a meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine.
- For immunization of close contacts of cases of groups A, Y, or W-135 meningococcal disease who were previously immunized with meningococcal polysaccharide vaccine (Quadrivalent – Groups A, C, Y, W-135) and first dose was received at ≥ 6 years of age, the recommendation is to re-vaccinate the contact if it is ≥ 3 years since the last dose. The previous recommendation was to re-vaccinate if it was ≥ 5 years since the last dose.
- New paragraph pertaining to outbreaks of meningococcal A disease and immunization with polysaccharide vaccine

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Page 9, Subsection 6.4 “Cadavers and infectious risk:”

- New subsection.

Page 10, Subsection 9.0 “Invasive Meningococcal Disease in Travelers:”

- New subsection.

Page 12, Subsection 10.3 “Outbreak Management:”

- Deleted recommendation “...chemoprophylaxis is to be used only for close contacts of confirmed and probable cases unless the outbreak is caused by a serogroup not included in available vaccine. Consult with BCCDC Epidemiology Services to discuss extending chemoprophylaxis to persons other than close contacts.” There is **no** evidence to support the provision of widespread chemoprophylaxis for persons who are not close contacts.

Please note the following changes to related pages in Chapter II – Immunization Program:

Pages 39 and 40 “Meningococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (Menomune®):

- Revised recommended intervals for re-vaccination
- Notation that it is only the multi-dose presentation of this product that contains thimerosal

Please delete and destroy the following from the Communicable Disease Control Manual: Chapter I – Management of Specific Diseases:

Meningococcal Disease
Pages 1 – 17

Dated June 2004

Insert the following replacement pages:

Meningococcal Disease
Pages 1 - 20

Dated October 2004

Please delete and destroy the following from the Communicable Disease Control Manual: Chapter II – Immunization Program:

Page 39
Page 40

Dated December 2003
Dated August 2003

Insert the following replacement pages:

Pages 39 and 40

Dated October 2004



If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Karen Pielak, Nurse Epidemiologist, at telephone (604) 660-6061, fax (604) 660-0197 or by e-mail to karen.pielak@bccdc.ca

Sincerely,

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